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May 10, 1944

Community Canning

Broadcast by Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, and Mrs. Bertha Olsen, Acting Chief, Community Food Preservation Section, Civilian Food Requirements Branch, Office of Distribution, War Food Administration, in the Department of Agriculture's portion of the National Farm and Home Hour, Wednesday, May 10, 1944, over stations associated with the Blue Network.

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CURLEY BRADLEY (CHICAGO): You know folks, one of the important wartime jobs that goes hand in hand with producing food is canning the foodstuffs...and the community canning program promises to go a long way in that direction. Today we've asked Ruth Van Deman if she and her guest would take a few minutes to tell you more about this vital food conservation program and what it'll do in this year of 1944. Ruth---

SWITCH TO WASHINGTON

VAN DEMAN: We'll do our best Curley....Mrs. Bertha Olsen of War Food Administration is our guest authority today. And she comes as the bearer of good tidings about the Government's new handbook on community canning centers.

Mrs Bertha Olsen: Yes, it's out, at long last, we're happy to say.

VAN DEMAN: And available, I suppose, to anyone who can put it to good use.

OLSEN: Yes, to any supervisor of a community canning center who wants up-to-date scientific timetables for processing fruits and vegetables. Or anyone who wants information on how to operate steam retorts and exhaust boxes, and tin-cans sealers, and all the other equipment in a community canning center.

VAN DEMAN: I see you have something, too, for the community that's never had a canning center.

OLSEN: Yes, we've outlined the way a community can go out about organizing and financing its own center.

VAN DEMAN: And selecting a supervisor, I notice, too. Isn't that about the most important of all?

OLSEN: Absolutely. ... Once a community gets the place and the equipment to run a canning center, the supervisor is the key person.

VAN DEMAN: Aren't there going to be more trained supervisors for community canning centers this year? I've been hearing about workshops being held all over the country to train supervisors for canning centers.

OLSEN: Yes, those workshops are going to have a big influence on the output from community canneries this year. ... Also, the people who learned the hard way last summer are going to profit by their mistakes this year.

VAN DEMAN: Well, I know one thing. If I were the supervisor of a canning center, I'd want a copy of your new handbook at my elbow right through the season. I'd

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want it there to consult whether I'd learned the hard way or the workshop way. ... Now another question, Mrs. Olsen. Have you any idea how many community canneries are going to be operating this summer?

OLSEN: Quite a few are operating in the South right now. In the Deep South, some operate almost all winter.

VAN DEMAN: That's right. They can grapefruit to eat in the summer and peaches to eat in the winter.

OLSEN: And tomatoes winter and summer, to eat all the year around.--- But getting back to your question about the number of community canneries. The estimate is somewhere between 3,000 and 5,000.

VAN DEMAN: And I hope you haven't heard of any folding up or delaying their plans since more foods went off the ration list.

OLSEN: No, I think American people are more sensible than that. Too many have relatives and friends over seas. They know this war isn't over yet. They know the big military push has not even come. And they know the food picture can change again - very seriously if the weather is unfavorable. ---- No, I believe the majority of American families are going right ahead with their plans to grow gardens this summer, and put up the surplus for next winter.

VAN DEMAN: I'd be glad, wouldn't you, to have any of our Farm and Home friends write us about their plans to can?

OLSEN: I surely would.

VAN DEMAN: And you in turn will be glad to handle their questions about community canning centers.

OLSEN: Yes, I'll give them all the information I can.

VAN DEMAN: And you'll send a copy of the new community canning handbook to any supervisor?

OLSEN: Surely, or to anyone in a community who is seriously interested in organizing a center. Some community canning centers help to put up food for the school lunch, or the hospital, or a local charity.

VAN DEMAN: A most efficient way to stock the community pantry as well as the family pantry. --- Well, Farm and Home friends, just to simplify ordering this bulletin on community canning centers, I suggest this. Address your card to Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, 25, D. C. Ask for Community Canning Centers. And Mrs. Olsen will see that you get a copy pronto.

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